AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A blow molded plastic hot-fill container, comprising:

a plurality of vacuum panels for inward flexure under vacuum, wherein each said vacuum panel is, over a majority of its surface, externally concave as viewed in cross section from a first direction and externally convex as viewed in cross section from a second direction orthogonal to said first direction[[,]] ; and

a plurality of circumferentially spaced ribs forming a spiral pattern, each of the ribs having a first edge and a second edge circumferentially spaced from the first edge, the first and second edges being substantially parallel to each other,

wherein said vacuum panels are separated from each other by the circumferentially spaced ribs.

2. (Previously presented) The container set forth in claim 1 wherein said container has a sidewall extending from a base to a neck finish, and wherein said vacuum panels are disposed in said sidewall.

3. (Previously presented) The container set forth in claim 1 including a base for supporting the container, a body extending from said base, a dome extending from said body and a neck finish extending from said dome, wherein said vacuum panels are disposed in said dome.

4. (Previously presented) The container set forth in claim 2 wherein said sidewall, including said vacuum panels, is of generally uniform wall thickness.

5. (Previously presented) The container set forth in claim 4 wherein said vacuum panels are uniformly spaced around an axis of said container.

6. (cancelled)

7. (Previously presented) The container set forth in claim 1 wherein said ribs have external surfaces on a common surface of revolution, and wherein said vacuum panels are recessed radially inwardly from said surface of revolution.

8. (Currently amended) A blow-molded plastic hot-fill container, comprising:

a base for supporting the container, a body extending from said base, a dome extending from said body and a neck finish extending from said dome,

wherein said dome includes an array of vacuum panels, each of said vacuum panels being, over a majority of its surface, externally concave as viewed in cross section from a first direction and externally convex as viewed in cross section from a second direction orthogonal to said first direction, ~~and~~

said dome includes a plurality of circumferentially spaced ribs forming a spiral pattern, each of the ribs having a first edge and a second edge circumferentially spaced from the first edge, the first and second edges being substantially parallel to each other, and

said vacuum panels are separated from each other by the circumferentially spaced ribs ~~in said dome~~.

9. (original) The container set forth in claim 8 wherein said vacuum panels are externally concave in cross section as viewed tangentially of said dome and externally convex in cross section as viewed axially of said dome.

10. (original) The container set forth in claim 8 wherein said dome, including said array of vacuum panels, is of generally uniform wall thickness.

11. (cancelled)

12. (Previously presented) The container set forth in claim 8 wherein said ribs are connected to annular rings that encircle said dome above and below said vacuum panels, wherein said ribs have external surfaces on a common surface of revolution, and wherein said vacuum panels are recessed radially inwardly from said surface of revolution.

13. (Currently amended) A blow-molded plastic hot-fill container, comprising ~~that~~:

a base for supporting the container, a body extending from said base, a dome extending from said body and a neck finish extending from said dome,

wherein said dome includes an array of flexible resilient vacuum panels separated from each other by circumferentially spaced ribs,

~~wherein~~ each of said vacuum panels is, over a majority of its surface, externally concave as viewed in cross section from a first direction and externally convex is viewed in cross section from a second direction orthogonal to said first direction,

the circumferentially spaced ribs form a spiral pattern, each of the ribs having a first edge and a second edge circumferentially spaced from the first edge, the first and second edges being substantially parallel to each other, and

~~wherein~~ said dome, including said array of vacuum panels, is of generally uniform wall thickness and circular in cross section.

14. (original) The container set forth in claim 13 wherein said vacuum panels are externally concave in cross section as viewed tangentially of said dome and externally convex in cross section as viewed axially of said dome.

15. (original) The container set forth in claim 13 wherein said ribs are connected to annular rings that encircle said dome above and below said vacuum panels, wherein said ribs have external surfaces on a common surface of revolution, and wherein said vacuum panels are recessed radially inwardly from said surface of revolution.

16. (Currently amended) A method of making a hot-fill plastic container that includes a step of blow molding a container having a plurality of vacuum panels for inward flexure under vacuum,

wherein said vacuum panels are, over a majority of their surface, externally concave as viewed in cross section from a first direction and externally convex as viewed in cross section from a second direction orthogonal to said first direction, ~~and~~

said vacuum panels are separated from each other by circumferentially spaced ribs, and

the circumferentially spaced ribs form a spiral pattern, each of the ribs having a first edge and a second edge circumferentially spaced from the first edge, the first and second edges being substantially parallel to each other.

17. (original) A container made in accordance with the method set forth in claim 16.

18. (Currently amended) A method of making a hot-fill plastic container that includes the step of blow molding a container having a base for supporting the container, a body extending from said base, a dome extending from said body and a neck finish extending from said dome,

wherein said dome includes an array of vacuum panels, each of said vacuum panels being, over a majority of its surface, externally concave as viewed in cross section from a first direction and externally convex as viewed in cross section from a second direction orthogonal to said first direction, ~~and~~

said vacuum panels are separated from each other by circumferentially spaced ribs in said dome, and

the circumferentially spaced ribs form a spiral pattern, each of the ribs having a first edge and a second edge circumferentially spaced from the first edge, the first and second edges being substantially parallel to each other.

19. (original) The method set forth in claim 18 wherein said container is blow molded from a preform.

20. (original) The method set forth in claim 19 wherein said vacuum panels are externally concave in cross section as viewed tangentially of said dome and externally convex in cross section as viewed axially of said dome.

21. (original) The method set forth in claim 19 wherein said dome, including said array of vacuum panels, is of generally uniform wall thickness.

22. (cancelled)

23. (Previously presented) The method set forth in claim 18 wherein said ribs are connected to annular rings that encircle said dome above and below said vacuum panels, wherein said ribs have external surfaces on a common surface of revolution, and wherein said vacuum panels are recessed radially inwardly from said surface of revolution.

24. (original) A molded plastic container made in accordance with the method set forth in claim 19.

25. (original) A molded plastic container made in accordance with the method set forth in claim 18.